

News

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Bureau of Labor Statistics

New York Office

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CONSUMER PRICES IN THE NORTHEAST: JANUARY 2003

Retail prices in the Northeast region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose 0.5 percent in January. Michael L. Dolfman, Regional Commissioner for the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics attributed much of the rise to increases within the housing index. Transportation, medical care, recreation, and other goods and services were also up in January. These gains were partially offset by declines for apparel and food. For the year ended January 2003, the CPI-U for the Northeast region rose 3.0 percent, and core inflation, as measured by the all items less food and energy index, was up 2.5 percent.

The housing index increased by 1.1 percent in January. Overall shelter costs rose 1.1 percent, primarily reflecting an increase in out-of-town lodging charges, typically up at this time of year with the start of the winter vacation season. Owners' equivalent rent and residential rent were each up by 0.5 percent. The fuels and utilities index rose 2.5 percent as a sharp increase of 5.0 percent for natural gas was only partially offset by a 0.7-percent decline in electricity charges. The household furnishings and operations index was little changed over the month.

The transportation index rose 0.5 percent in January, largely reflecting a 3.5-percent rise in the gasoline index. Dolfman noted that gasoline prices have risen 32.8 percent over the year but remain 10.5 percent below their peak level in June 2001. The index for new and used motor vehicles declined 0.6 percent in January, with a 0.7-percent decline in the new cars component.

The apparel index, often down in January with post-holiday sales, declined 3.8 percent. The January drop followed declines in the last two months of 2002. Over the past 12 months, the apparel index is down 2.9 percent.

Among other major index components, the medical care index rose 0.3 percent in January, reflecting gains of 0.3 percent for medical care services and 0.4 percent for medical care commodities. The recreation index also rose 0.3 percent, while the other goods and services index inched up 0.1 percent. The food and beverages index inched down 0.1 percent in January, primarily due to a 0.4-percent decline in the food away from home component. The education and communication index was unchanged over the month.



Round-the-clock recorded messages for the **Consumer Price Index** and a variety of other **Bureau of Labor Statistics** data are available by dialing the **New York Information Office's** main telephone number: **(212) 337-2400**. For recorded messages, press '2.' Press '1' for 24-hour Fax-on-Demand service.

Table A. Percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), by region

Expenditure category	(not seasonally adjusted)									
	January 2002 – January 2003					December 2002 – January 2003				
	US	North-east	Mid-west	South	West	US	North-east	Mid-west	South	West
All items	2.6	3.0	2.4	2.6	2.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.6
Food and beverages	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.4	0.2	-0.1	0.2	0.4	0.1
Housing	2.6	3.7	2.5	2.1	2.3	0.7	1.1	0.3	0.2	1.2
Apparel	-1.9	-2.9	-2.2	-0.4	-2.8	-2.8	-3.8	-2.8	-3.0	-1.8
Transportation	4.6	4.8	3.9	5.4	4.2	0.8	0.5	1.6	1.1	0.3
Medical care	4.6	4.4	4.5	5.0	4.4	0.4	0.3	1.0	0.3	0.3
Recreation	1.1	0.2	1.8	1.4	1.0	0.4	0.3	-0.1	0.4	0.9
Education and communication	2.3	2.8	2.1	2.1	2.3	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.6	0.7
Other goods and services	3.2	6.4	3.4	1.5	2.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5

For the year ended January 2003, the CPI-U for the Northeast region rose 3.0 percent, largely reflecting an increase in the housing index. Housing rose 3.7 percent over the year primarily driven by a 4.2-percent increase in the shelter component. A sharp 5.7-percent rise in the fuels and utilities component also contributed to the housing index rise. The transportation index rose 4.8 percent over the year, reflecting a 32.8-percent rise in gasoline prices. The food and beverages index was up 0.8 percent. Among the remaining expenditure categories, other goods and services rose 6.4 percent over the year, largely due to higher tobacco prices. Medical care rose 4.4 percent and education and communication, 2.8 percent. Recreation edged up 0.2 percent. Moderating these increases, apparel declined 2.9 percent.

The Northeast increase of 3.0 percent for the year ended January 2003 was well above the national rise of 2.6 percent and was the highest among the four regions.

The Northeast Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) was 187.2 in January. The CPI-W rose 0.3 percent over the month and rose 3.2 percent over the year.

Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month to month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences. Regions are defined as the four Census regions, comprised as follows: Northeast - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Midwest - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. South -Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. West - Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods
Northeast (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Nov. 2002	Dec. 2002	Jan. 2003	Jan. 2002	Nov. 2002	Dec. 2002
<u>Expenditure category</u>						
All items	190.1	189.6	190.5	3.0	0.2	0.5
All items (December 1977=100)	299.3	298.6	299.9	-	-	-
Food and beverages	179.6	179.8	179.6	.8	.0	-.1
Food	178.8	178.9	178.7	.6	-.1	-.1
Food at home	177.4	177.5	177.7	-.2	.2	.1
Food away from home	183.2	183.4	182.6	1.7	-.3	-.4
Alcoholic beverages	190.0	189.7	189.6	2.7	-.2	-.1
Housing	196.2	195.7	197.9	3.7	.9	1.1
Shelter	236.3	235.4	238.0	4.2	.7	1.1
Rent of primary residence 1/.....	219.7	220.5	221.5	4.7	.8	.5
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence 1/ 2/	248.1	248.6	249.8	4.8	.7	.5
Fuels and utilities	134.7	136.5	139.9	5.7	3.9	2.5
Fuels	124.0	125.8	129.3	6.1	4.3	2.8
Gas (piped) and electricity 1/.....	136.8	138.2	140.3	3.2	2.6	1.5
Electricity (1).....	128.3	130.2	129.3	-1.7	.8	-.7
Utility natural gas service 1/.....	153.9	154.5	162.3	11.8	5.5	5.0
Household furnishings and operations	128.9	128.1	128.2	-1.8	-.5	.1
Apparel	123.5	119.0	114.5	-2.9	-7.3	-3.8
Transportation	155.5	155.4	156.2	4.8	.5	.5
Private transportation	150.6	150.5	151.3	5.4	.5	.5
New and used motor vehicles 3/.....	98.8	98.6	98.0	-2.1	-.8	-.6
New vehicles	140.6	140.8	140.0	-1.4	-.4	-.6
New cars and trucks 3/ 4/.....	97.9	98.0	97.4	-1.5	-.5	-.6
New cars 4/.....	138.6	138.6	137.6	-1.9	-.7	-.7
Used cars and trucks	151.6	151.2	151.0	-5.0	-.4	-.1
Motor fuel	122.1	121.5	125.8	32.7	3.0	3.5
Gasoline (all types)	121.4	120.9	125.1	32.8	3.0	3.5
Gasoline, unleaded regular 4/.....	121.4	120.7	125.1	34.7	3.0	3.6
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade 4/ 5/.....	124.8	124.2	128.6	32.4	3.0	3.5
Gasoline, unleaded premium 4/.....	119.7	119.5	123.1	29.3	2.8	3.0
Medical care	309.7	310.6	311.5	4.4	.6	.3
Medical care commodities	272.7	272.5	273.5	2.7	.3	.4
Medical care services	318.2	319.4	320.3	4.9	.7	.3
Professional services 1/.....	268.8	270.1	270.5	1.4	.6	.1
Recreation 3/.....	107.4	107.3	107.6	0.2	0.2	0.3
Education and communication 3/.....	109.9	110.1	110.1	2.8	.2	.0
Other goods and services	314.9	315.6	316.0	6.4	.3	.1
<u>Commodity and service group</u>						
All items	190.1	189.6	190.5	3.0	.2	.5
Commodities	152.2	151.5	151.3	1.7	-.6	-.1
Commodities less food and beverages	134.7	133.7	133.5	2.5	-.9	-.1
Nondurables less food and beverages	146.4	144.8	144.9	6.7	-1.0	.1
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	166.9	167.2	170.2	11.5	2.0	1.8
Durables	119.0	118.6	118.1	-3.3	-.8	-.4
Services	227.3	227.1	228.9	3.8	.7	.8
Rent of shelter 2/	247.0	246.1	248.7	4.2	.7	1.1
Transportation services	203.1	203.2	203.5	2.2	.2	.1
Other services	264.4	264.8	265.6	3.4	.5	.3
<u>Special aggregate indexes</u>						
All items less medical care	184.5	184.0	184.8	2.9	.2	.4
All items less food	192.3	191.8	192.8	3.4	.3	.5
All items less shelter	174.6	174.3	174.5	2.4	-.1	.1
Commodities less food	136.9	135.9	135.7	2.4	-.9	-.1
Nondurables	163.4	162.6	162.6	3.4	-.5	.0
Nondurables less food	149.0	147.5	147.5	6.4	-1.0	.0
Nondurables less food and apparel	168.1	168.3	171.0	10.5	1.7	1.6
Services less rent of shelter 2/	225.2	225.8	226.7	3.2	.7	.4
Services less medical care services	220.4	220.1	221.9	3.7	.7	.8
Energy	123.5	124.3	128.2	15.6	3.8	3.1
All items less energy	199.1	198.6	199.0	2.2	-.1	.2
All items less food and energy	204.3	203.6	204.2	2.5	.0	.3
Commodities less food and energy commodities	145.2	143.9	142.6	-1.2	-1.8	-.9
Energy commodities	121.6	122.0	127.7	30.7	5.0	4.7
Services less energy services	236.1	235.8	237.5	3.8	.6	.7

1/ This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series converted to a geometric means estimator in January, 1999.

2/ Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

3/ Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

4/ Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

5/ Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

- Data not available.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.